

McMurray Middle School

ELL Students: Language and Culture

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Our Karen Students

Facts about our ELL students:

Out of 753 students 281 are active ELL students, another 42 or Transitional 1 or 2, and another 227 have exited ELL services therefore their first language is not English.

Our population broken down:

17.3 % are Asian – These students are mainly Burmese refugees, most are ethnic Karen and speak Karen. We also have students who speak: Chinese, Lao, Korean, and Vietnamese, and Thai.

The Burmese refugees are from camps in Thailand or Malaysia. Most have had very little education before coming here. They are typically not literate in their native language, but there are some that are.

15.9% Black or African American -Most of our ELL students from Africa speak Arabic, but some speak: Swahili, Somali, Dinka, and other languages. We have students from Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Egypt.

44.8% Hispanic – Most of these students come from Mexico, but some come from Cuba or Central American countries. They all speak Spanish as a first language and most have had some formal schooling in their native country, although many are not literate in their native language.

22% White – This includes both European and Middle Eastern students. Most of our ELL students are Kurdish or Nepali. The Nepali students are refugees, and some were taught survival English in their refugee camps.

FACTORS THAT MAY IMPACT SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

1. **Learning Styles** has an impact on second language learning. Learning styles include: sensory-intuitive, visual-verbal, active-reflective, sequential-global, and inductive-deductive.

2. **Language shock** is another factor that has an impact on SLA. Language shock is the frustration a student feels when not only they must learn a second language, but they are in an unfamiliar setting of the classroom, which may seem threatening.

3. **Culture shock** can also impact second language learning. Culture shock is the up and down feeling a person gets from experiencing a new culture. It can be very mild to extreme. Students can go through three stages of culture shock: stage 1 is Euphoria, where the student is excited, stage 2 is Culture Shock, where the student may become depressed or angry and language learning may stop. Stage 3 is Adaptation, where the student comes to terms with the new culture, this can take several months.

4. **Cross-linguistic factors** can impact second language learning. These include:

Statement Verification – second language learners have a hard time verifying a statement with a negative word in it.

Morphological Awareness – second language learners must learn three types of morphology

Inflections
Derivatives
Compounds

